

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2002 as Older Americans Month. I commend the national aging network of State, local, and tribal organizations, service and healthcare providers, caregivers, and millions of dedicated volunteers for your daily efforts on behalf of our senior citizens. I encourage all Americans to honor their elders, to seek opportunities to address their needs, and to work together to reinforce the bonds that unite families and communities. I also call upon all our citizens to publicly reaffirm our Nation's commitment to older Americans this month and throughout the year.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

George W. Bush

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The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders

May 2, 2002

President Bush It is a pleasure to welcome President Aznar and President Prodi to Washington, DC, for this summit. We had a good discussion on the common challenges facing the United States and the European Union, including the urgent need to fight terror and to promote peace in the Middle East.

Just one month ago I called on all the parties in the Middle East to step up to their responsibilities to end terror, to make progress toward peace, and to build better lives for all the people of the region. In recent days, we're beginning to see some signs of progress. The situation in Ramallah has been resolved nonviolently. We're working for peace in Bethlehem. I'm encouraged by my meeting with Crown Prince Abdullah and

the steps he has taken to advance his vision of peace. Next week I will meet with Prime Minister Sharon and King Abdullah of Jordan to discuss next steps on the road ahead.

The United States and the EU share a common vision of two states, Palestine and Israel, living side by side in peace and security. This vision offers the Palestinian people a new opportunity to choose how they live. We should take this opportunity to help build institutions that will serve the Palestinian people, a Palestinian state, and its neighbors as well.

A Palestinian state must be achieved by negotiating an end to occupation, but such a state cannot be based on a foundation of terror or corruption. A Palestinian state must be based on the principles that are critical to freedom and prosperity: democracy and open markets, the rule of law, transparent and accountable administration, and respect for individual liberties and civil society.

We want to work with the Palestinian people, our regional partners, and the international community to build a Palestinian state that both lives at peace with Israel and lives up to the best hopes of its people.

The EU, as well, and the United States, has an important role to play. When the EU and the United States work together, we multiply our effectiveness. Today we discussed our desires to continue working together. We see this in the fight against global terror, where we've been cooperating closely. We see this in the Balkans, where together we have solidified the peace, prevented civil war in Macedonia, and helped the region become more fully part of the European community. And we're working together to bring reconstruction and hope to Afghanistan, so that it never again serves as a haven for terror.

We must bring the same spirit of cooperation to our common economic agenda. Today I informed President Aznar and President Prodi that I will work with our Congress to fully comply with the WTO decision on our tax rules for international corporations. This will require both time, and it will require legislation. I hope and expect that we can all act in the same spirit of understanding as we work through other problems.

This is a time for hope for the United States and for Europe, a time when our co-operation could lead to a safer and to a better world. I look forward to traveling to Europe later this month to strengthen our close ties and to advance our common goals.

Ahora el placer es mio para welcome my friend, el Presidente de Espana, Jose Maria Aznar. Senor Presidente.

President Aznar. Good afternoon, everyone. First of all, I'd like to thank President Bush for his hospitality at this meeting between the European Union and the United States. And besides his hospitality, I'd like to thank him for the hard work and dedication that he and his entire staff have put into ensuring the success of this meeting.

The first thing is that I hope not to disappoint people in terms of their expectations about hearing about strong controversies between Europe and the United States, because that has not happened. In fact, we are here to send out a very positive message concerning the strength of the relationship between the European Union and the United States, and especially our determination that that strong relationship be further strengthened in the extraordinary circumstances we are currently experiencing politically, economically, and in terms of security that we must face together.

So the message is that we have strengthened the ties between the EU and the United States, thanks to this meeting. And this is no doubt a very positive factor. I'd like to briefly touch on four issues, because President Bush has made a very accurate summary of our meeting.

Number one, the fight against terrorism: The work carried out jointly between the U.S. and the EU is increasingly being enhanced, becoming broader. You know that the EU has adopted an action plan against terrorism. We've reviewed the legislation in all of our countries to step up the fight against terrorism, to combat financing of terrorism and comply with U.N. resolutions and join all other countries in this fight.

Secondly, we have a mandate from all EU countries to negotiate an agreement for judicial assistance and cooperation on criminal matters. And we hope that negotiations for that will proceed as quickly as possible, so

that this doesn't just pertain to security issues but will also spread to judicial matters. It would be a bit absurd not to be aware of the fact that terrorists move internationally, and we have to approach that from a common judicial area, to the extent possible.

Between us, we've broadened—or lengthened—the list of terrorist organizations, and we hope that there will be an increased rapprochement between the lists approved by both the U.S. and the EU. And as far as that goes, we are firmly resolved to combat terrorism wherever it takes place, with all that that entails, and with the ultimate objective of eradicating terrorism so as to enjoy a safer, more stable world for all.

The second issue I'd like to refer to has to do with more general topics. You heard from President Bush about the Middle East, and in just a few moments, the quad will be meeting again—that is, the U.S., the EU, Russia, and U.N. Secretary-General. That agreement is extremely important. We attach the utmost importance to the work that we can do jointly in the Middle East in the quest for the essential features: security for all; an immediate cease-fire; and a political perspective which would lead to a democratic, independent Palestinian state and a state of Israel that is entitled to live in security, calm, and free from any kind of violent or terrorist aggression on its territory. So that is the perspective. These are the initiatives. And this is what we're working on, along with economic issues.

I also wanted to refer to the very positive joint work we're carrying out in the Balkans and in Afghanistan and the exchange of opinions we've had concerning Russia. President Bush and the European Union and I, myself, have worked on providing support for President Putin, considering their new strategic approach. President Bush's trip, the NATO meeting in Rome, and the EU-Russia meeting, all upcoming, point to a particularly important turning point in terms of defining new strategic positions for Russia in the world that require our understanding and support.

The final point is that U.S. and Europe account for 40 percent of world trade. Between us, approximately 96, 97 percent of the economic issues work satisfactorily, with

no problems. And we have agreed to work very hard on a positive agenda to further enhance the commercial ties and ties in terms of trade between the EU and the U.S. And in terms of certain specific differences—President Bush has referred to a few of them—it is our expectation and hope and this is what we're going to work on, that in the coming months there will be negotiations underway which will naturally safeguard the fundamental interests of both sides and, in compliance with the WTO, that will enable us to lead to positive results and conclusions.

We have worked on all of this; we have made progress on all of this; so I would like to say that from the point of view of the European Council and the EU, this summit has fulfilled the goal of strengthening our ties and relations and will ensure the success of these relations between the U.S. and the EU.

President Prodi. [*Inaudible*—but to what has been told by President Bush and President Aznar. It was clear today that the world is going better when U.S. and Europe get together. We have seen it recently in Doha, in Monterrey; we have seen it in the Balkans and in Afghanistan. We have sometimes disagreement, but we really share the same deep values and the same common strategy.

We tackled also some case in which we have difference—steel, for example, on the legitimacies of U.S. safeguards, which we believe are certainly harming us, on the possibility of short-term rebalancing. But we have agreed that discussions should continue, without any prejudice to our respective rights under WTO. We both intend to play it by the WTO rules. And so I think that even in this field, we shall demonstrate friendly way of working.

I want to praise the President of the United States for the leadership he's showing on a problem that is certainly difficult—you know, the export—on the export subsidies and on the problems that are linked to that.

And you know, I want to end just with one reflection. I think that everybody in America should consider what we are doing now in Europe. What we are trying to do in this great 2002 Europe is now the currency of 12 nations. We will soon enlarge European Union to embrace until, I hope, 10 new

countries before the end of the year. And we are also working on the convention to reform our institutions. The democratic unification of our Continent is happening, and it is an enormous effort. And this is really the end of the end of the end of the cold war. And I hope that what we are doing is appreciated for the dimension of the problem, if you consider the difference of income, the different tradition, the different habits of the 25 countries that now we shall have together inside the European Union.

So what we present here is really a new Europe.

President Bush. Thank you, President.

I think we've got time for three questions. It makes sense that an American asks a question, and then Jose Maria will call on somebody, and President Prodi will call on somebody, and then we've all got to go on our respective ways.

So I'll start with Mr. Fournier, AP [Ron Fournier, Associated Press]. Yes.

Q. Thank you, sir.

President Bush. You're welcome.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Despite the existence of what you called some signs of progress in the Middle East in the long month since your Rose Garden statement, neither side has fully complied. Just yesterday, Ariel Sharon scuttled your push for a U.N. peace mission to Jenin. And Yasser Arafat—Arafat called the Israelis terrorists, Nazis, and racists. And yet, there have been no consequences for defying you. Are you open to cutting off U.S. aid to either Israel or the Palestinians, and are there any consequences for those who thumb their nose at the President of the United States?

President Bush. In this world, there are people who think the glass is half empty or half full. I tend to look at it as half full. I'm optimistic we're making good progress. After all, a week ago there were—Yasser Arafat was boarded up in his building in Ramallah, a building full of, evidently, German peace protestors and all kinds of people. They're now out; he's now free to show leadership, to lead the world. We're making good progress.

There's a lot to be done. We're dealing with centuries and years of hatred, and I understand that. But I am pleased that the Arab world is responding. I had great visits with the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia. They're—according to some American newspapers, they're, you know, very much engaged, and I appreciate that. I'm pleased with that. I think that's a positive development.

I am absolutely convinced it's going to require the efforts of the Saudis and the Jordanians and the Egyptians to help cement a lasting peace. And the Crown Prince is following up on his initiative, and I think that's a positive development.

I think it's very important for Chairman Arafat to show the world that he's capable of leading. As I said in my remarks in the Rose Garden about a month ago—which, by the way, in the terms of the Middle East isn't all that long a period of time, in my judgment—that he has just been disappointing. He has disappointed. He's had some chance to grab the peace and hasn't done so in the past, and therefore he's let down the Palestinian people. Now's the chance to show he can lead.

And of course, I placed responsibilities on Israel as well, and I look forward to continuing my discussions with world leaders. Part of the importance of meeting with Jose and Roman was to talk about a way forward. And as Jose Maria mentioned, the Secretary of State is going to be talking with the ministers of the quad about a way forward. I'll be doing the same thing with King Abdullah and Prime Minister Sharon, as we come up with a way to cement a vision of peace in place.

But it starts with people assuming responsibilities, and people are beginning to assume responsibilities. And that's why I'm optimistic progress is being made.

Jose.

Q. No threat of losing their aid, sir?

President Bush. Jose.

Terrorism

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—the American press and the public opinion in America is still referring to ETA just like a band who is fighting for its independence in Spain. I wonder if the United States has same commit to fight ter-*

rorists in Spain as much as is about fighting terrorists in other parts of the world, and what can you do to help Spain in this fight? And I'd like to know also your opinion about the way this topic is treated in America.

President Bush. Yes, let me start with that, and then you can finish.

President Aznar. No, no, no. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. It's your country. [*Laughter*]

When I was last in Spain, I talked about this very subject, and I spoke—this was before September the 11th. And I spoke very clearly about my friend's efforts to fight terrorist activity within the country of Spain. I just want to remind you of the timing, that I made a public statement about terrorist activities in the country of Spain prior to my country being attacked. So terrorist activities within the borders of Spain has been on my mind.

It is—we stand ready to help the President. If the President asks for help, the United States of America is more than willing to provide that help. We're doing—we've got great cooperations—cooperation with our friends in Spain. We share intelligence; we talk about arrests that we've made. I mean, we are close friends and allies. And Jose Maria knows this very well: I'm a phone call away, and terror is terror, and we must fight it wherever it exists.

President Aznar. President Bush was very right in saying that when he was in Madrid, during his visit to Spain before 9/11, in May/June last year, he explicitly expressed his support for Spain's fight against terrorism.

But what I would like to say once again is that we can establish no differences among terrorists. They're all the same. They're all seeking to destroy our harmonious coexistence, to destroy civilization. They're seeking to destroy our democracy and freedoms. A terrorist attacking the Twin Towers in New York or the Pentagon in Washington is tantamount to the same kind of criminal who places a car bomb in Madrid or on the streets of any other Spanish city. President Bush and I know that there are no differences as far as that go. And that's how we approach the issue, and we will continue to do so.

The cooperation between Spain and the U.S. on counterterrorism is maximum; the

cooperation between intelligence and security services, also—because we both hold the conviction that moral values underpin our struggle and our fight against terrorism. And the moral value of what it means to uphold the principles of democracy and freedom and the principles of our countries in the face of terrorism is basic.

And the memory of the victims is the very finest thing. We must remember. We must never forget the victims. That's the best reason to combat terrorism.

And there is never any reason whatsoever to establish dialog with terrorists—ever. To initiate dialog with terrorists is tantamount to problems for democracy. Terrorists cannot have, must not have, and certainly for our part will never have any other fate than that of being permanently defeated in Spain or anywhere else. And when I say “anywhere else,” what I mean is that cooperation with United States and most especially with President Bush in the international fight against terrorism is and will continue to be to the maximum.

President Bush. Pick one, Roman.

NATO/EU Defense Policy

Q. Yes, this is a question for all of the Presidents. I have to—I want to ask a question about the future of NATO and the cooperation with the European Union. For many months now, there is a problem with the future of ESDP, because of Greece's position—opposition not to accept the Ankara agreement that Great Britain, with the participation of the U.S. and EU, broke with Turkey, a non-EU member of NATO. Do you have anything on this issue, and did you discuss this issue with the President?

President Prodi. No, we didn't discuss this issue today, but of course this is part of our vision for the future strategy because we want to make the progress of this type of cooperation—that is, shared progress.

We mentioned before an enlargement, you know, and of course, that we are—our goal, our strategy is to have also Cyprus among the countries of enlargement. We hope that will be one of the 10 countries in December. So we think that a cooperative spirit can permit this goal, because Europe must have also in the Mediterranean area its role, its influ-

ence. And it's positive influence in these difficult days in the area.

President Bush. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:14 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. President Bush met with President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain, in his capacity as President of the European Council, and President Romano Prodi of the European Commission. President Aznar spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; King Abdullah II of Jordan; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. President Aznar referred to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Reporters referred to ETA, the Basque Fatherland and Liberty separatist group operating primarily in the Basque region of Spain; and ESDP, the European Security and Defense Policy. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a National Day of Prayer Reception

May 2, 2002

Welcome to the White House. One of the best things about my job is, sometimes I get introduced by my wife—[laughter]—who I love dearly.

Today we continue a tradition that is as old as our Nation itself, setting aside a day in which Americans are encouraged to pray, pray for their neighbors, and pray for our Nation. The National Day of Prayer is a vital part of our national heritage, because prayer is a vital part of our national life.

I'm grateful to all of you who remind us that a great people must spend time on bended knee, in humility, searching for wisdom in the presence of the Almighty. I want to thank the Heritage Signature Chorale and Dr. Stanley Thurston for being here today. I want to thank Amy Burton, soloist of the New York City Opera, and we're sure glad you brought your son. I want to thank Shirley Dobson, who is the chair of the National Day of Prayer Task Force. Thank you for your leadership, Shirley. I want to thank Dr. Lloyd Ogilvie and Dr. Daniel Coughlin for being here as well. I'm honored that you both